

What Is the Real Cause of Your Hypertension?

My doctor and I have been having trouble controlling my blood pressure with medication since 2001. I was taking four pills a day and still was not able to get my blood pressure to stay at consistent levels. In the mean time, I was suffering from a pinched nerve in my lower back. The pinched nerve was being treated with inflammation medication to keep the swelling down. High blood pressure (HBP) is prominent in black families. Many times doctors will not do all the research and testing necessary to find out why our blood pressure is high. The doctor recommended that I lose weight, adopt a regular exercise program, and watch what I eat.

After 3 years of doing this, I lost 25 pounds, began aerobic exercise 3 times a week, and eat healthier. I felt better and was able to handle my stress more effectively, but the blood pressure was still out of control. In 2007, I began seeing a spine specialist from MSU who was able to relieve the pressure on the nerves in my back through surgery. The result was my blood pressure slowly dropped until it was evident that I was taking too much medication. It was such a relief to be out of pain and be able to reduce my medication intake by 4 pills a day. I still take one pill for my high blood pressure, but I am really happy that I found the cause for my high blood pressure. Always get a second opinion and don't stop trying to find your true medical problem instead of treating your symptoms with pills.

Regular exercise and a healthy diet is still the key to success with high blood pressure, but always check deeper if HBP is not common in your family.

Submitted by Elizabeth Chaney, Michigan Department of Treasury